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not the *icalo* of others! No. Let them cut trees wherever they like! 423
(*kutematemafye*, i.e. the duplicated stem with the addition of the particle *fye*—which gives an idea of haphazard or unsystematic action.) It is I who am the owner of the *mpanga*. It is not your river! No. Let them work to find food, and then let them bring tribute here, millet and Kaffir corn and beans. Let them bring tribute of all. Are they not all my people?'[1] The statement that it was every one's duty to produce as much food as possible, and to give tribute of it to the chief, was clapped by all the councillors present, and the hereditary priest, Cimba, the oldest man present, when specially consulted on the subject, said, 'Yes, that is just how it was in the old days. It was always the same. The people made gardens wherever they liked, and brought food to the chief.'

But are we then to conclude that any individual Bemba has the right to make a garden wherever he pleases, however inconvenient to his neighbours? In the eyes of the chief this may be so, but as between headman and headman the rights of cultivation are limited by a number of factors, economic and sociological. To begin with, when choosing the site for his millet garden there are a number of positive inducements for a man to choose ground near his own village rather than in the territory of another. He wants the shortest walk possible between his hut and his garden. He is cultivating as a member of a kinship group, and therefore wants to cut his trees for his garden in the same neighbourhood as those of his father-in-law, and the husbands of his wife's sisters (cf. Chap. XVIII). This is all the more important since when the grain is ripening the whole group want to build grass huts (*imitanda*) near their gardens to watch the crops against birds, and they thus set up a little settlement together.

Besides the obvious advantages of making gardens near the 183
village, the whole question of the people's rights of cultivation depends on the system of human relationships within their local groups. The variable composition of the village and the ease with which families split off and disappear, make the Bemba very apprehensive of actions likely to disrupt the group. Any European who listens much to the ordinary conversation of these natives will be

[1] *Bali bonse bantu bandi. Ni calo candi. Te calo ca kwa bambi, yo! Batematemafye! Ni ine mwine mpanga. Te umumana wobe! Babombe ukusange cakulya. Kabili batule kuno, male, na mazaka, ne lilanda, batule. Bali bonse bantu bandi?* 17. v. 31.

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impressed by their constant emphasis on the value of peaceful relationships, whether within the village, or the kinship group. They are afraid of the man or woman whose quick temper or sharp tongue makes them liable to take offence or give it. I have heard several men seeking wives in a strange village ask anxiously of their acquaintances there, 'Does she come of a quarrelsome family? Do they make offensive remarks?' (*Ikusose fibi.*) Neighbours with good reputations are those whose 'hearts do not get hot quick', and who tend to ignore insults—*ukusula*—a traditional cultural attitude by which a man can acquire kudos by voluntarily giving up his rights so as to avoid friction. This pattern of toleration is impressed on the Bemba from their earliest years. Parents who rebuke their children for little else are yet quite firm on this one point: no quarrels must be allowed. A sobbing child of six, about to punch a smaller boy who had knocked over his mud-pudding, was picked up sharply and told to repeat, 'The chief of another tribe may stay where he pleases' (*Mfumu shya bene baikalapo*), i.e. every one has a right to do as he pleases. Such incidents are quite common, and similar behaviour is noticeable as between children and adults. An elderly relative often shrugs his shoulders at a child's decision to do or not do something it is asked, and says (*Ni mwine*) 'He is the owner of the affair', i.e. the child must decide. The legal relations between one man and another are discussed with the same conscious effort at toleration. Certain obligations are fixed and definite, and acknowledged by the whole community, but there are a number of issues in which the rights of two individuals are not so clear, and a clash of personal interests seems to be threatened. In such cases the man of sense and good breeding does not try to define his claim. He avoids putting the matter to the test in the interests of peace.[1]

It is this anxiety to avoid friction which influences the people in their choice of land for cultivation. A chief may not care whether the villagers of one community cut gardens in the land bordering the huts of another, but the villagers themselves will be afraid to do so. They do not want to risk the anger of the neigh-

[1] There is also a supernatural sanction behind this pattern of human behaviour. The man who dies feeling injured, or with a sense that he has been denied his rightful dues, becomes a *icima*, or haunting spirit, avenging the wrongs he has suffered on the living. Hence the uneasy feeling of the Bemba when any one publically announces a grievance, or is known to have been wronged. Thus religious belief, norms of conduct, and the type of agricultural system practised, all combine to determine the legal rules for the use of land.

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bouring headman, and they will be afraid that their gardens will not prosper if he withholds his blessing from their enterprise. In the case brought before the Paramount Chief (p. 266) the inhabitants of village B had not wantonly cut gardens in the ground of A, but the son of headman B had married the daughter of headman A, had gone to live at A according to the rule of matrilocal marriage, and had then deserted his wife and returned to B to marry another woman there. Instead of relinquishing his garden near A he continued to clear new bush there. Under ordinary circumstances it is extremely rare for a case of this kind to be brought before the court. If there had been no contributory cause of dispute, it would have been much more usual for the villagers of B to stay on the poorer soil their own side of the river, rather than risk a quarrel with the inhabitants of A.

Again, as between the members of one village, though natives tend to inform the European that they may cut trees wherever they like, and that they need not ask the permission of the headman before choosing a site, yet in fact they are not so free as their statements indicate.[1] Young people are afraid to take ground they believe to have been chosen by elder members of the community. If two interests clash a man would rather abandon a site on which a week's work has been done than risk a dispute. At the beginning of the tree-cutting season it is usual for the men of a village to gather together in the *nsaka* of an evening and to make informal announcements as to the ground they mean to clear. The elders take the lead in such discussions. Next morning each individual starts out for the bush, probably with two or three friends, and each blazes trees (*ukukome nkwa*) to mark the strip he intends to use. It is rare for a man to mark out the limits of the area he means to cultivate, nor in fact does he usually decide there and then how far his garden will reach (*icikongwana*, plur. *ifikongwana*). It is only occasionally that one tree is cut at each corner to mark the boundaries, and there seems to be a feeling that it is presumptuous to do so. It is considered as an almost arrogant statement of claim.[2]

[1] Cullen Gouldsbury states that formerly the headmen allotted ground for millet gardens, but I heard this denied. 'Notes on the Customary Law of the Awemba', *Journ. of the African Society*, vol. xiv, no. lvi, 1915, p. 377.

[2] It was interesting to see that in the villages where natives had begun to employ paid labour they were obliged to mark out the limits to be cut by the labourers in self-defence. It seemed to be an imitation of the European method of giving piece-work.

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and in the case of a big village the circular strip of land surrounding the houses is only barely adequate to give each his due. The same desire to avoid quarrelling over land is still apparent, but fixed rules govern its selection. The site of a man's *mputa* is determined by the position of his hut. When a village is being built the old men have the first right to choose where they will build their huts. After that the young men group themselves—usually together at one end of the village. The strip of ground behind each hut on the outside ring is the property of the owner of the house. Those who have built in the centre of the village must cultivate beyond. The owners of the outside houses are allowed to cultivate as far as the nearest natural boundary, such as a river or path, if they desire to do so, otherwise they must announce where they intend to stop so that others can cultivate beyond them.

The village plan on p. 177 shows how owners A, A5, B, B4, B9, C, C7, D, D3, D6, F, F2 cultivate ground immediately behind their huts while the others have strips farther out into the bush.

At first sight it is difficult to understand how the conflicting aims and ambitions of each individual can be satisfied in practice. But it must be remembered that a Bemba, cultivating alone, cannot hope to dig up more than a certain amount of land, and he estimates his capabilities in the coming year with fair precision, as do also his neighbours. But his own conception of good form seems to weigh with him more than such purely economic considerations. He does not want to appear presumptuous, or to make claims beyond his status. It is bad for a young man to demand as much ground as an old, even if he occupies an outside hut, or for a single woman to fix wide boundaries to her patch. Fear of the accusation of pride (*icilamba*) or that reputation for personal ambition, which is so often associated with charges of witchcraft in this society, are important factors in fixing the limits of village beds, and the whole division seems to be arranged without much formal allocation. A man estimates his neighbour's intentions and gauges public opinion as to his own status, and acts accordingly. He does not even put boundaries (*mpaka*) between his beds and those of another for fear of accusations of sorcery, and if there is a doubtful issue it can be taken for granted that personal relations and questions of relative status are always put before agricultural considerations. I have seen at least two cases where a man considered that his privilege had been infringed upon, but decided

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to ignore the injury rather than to risk disturbing the personal relations in the village.[1] In the case of new-comers arriving at a village and wanting ground for *mputa*, they may either cultivate beyond the gardens of the older inhabitants, or in some cases a man may subdivide his own beds among his younger relatives. At Kasakatula three heads of families had divided up ground in this way to their sons-in-law.

The following text written for me by an educated native clearly describes the attitude to land appropriation, whether for millet gardens or village mounds.

'In the month of April, and also the month of May, that is when people mark the trees to cut their *icitemwa*. It goes on through the cold weather, and one or two here and there go on until September. Now it doesn't do to cut trees unless everyone agrees to cut. And to mark the trees, the people in the village one by one, they choose sites and arrange their boundaries where each is to reach to. When one man has built himself a grass hut on the spot, another must not come and cut near it or it will be a serious cause of grievance. People who quarrel about trees, their fellows call them fools, people of no sense. They say, "You are not the child of an animal (i.e. human being). No! You are the child of a sorcerer. You cut trees like a sorcerer does" (*Tauli mwana wa nama. Yo! Uli mwana wa mulochi. Uletema bulochibulochi*). Because they say, "The trees are the plumes on the head of God. They are not to be fought over" (*Imiti ingala ukya kwa Lesa. Tashikomenwa*). It is the right thing to arrange boundaries in a peaceful way. No one fights about trees unless it is an unnatural child, a sorcerer! Any person of good repute when he sees one of his friends has marked a site for cutting, clears out, and if he has sense goes and discusses the matter with him. One man, if he has begun to cut trees where another has marked the site, let him clear out of it and leave the branches he has cut and go and cut trees somewhere else, and don't let him start right near the boundary either. And when people go to dig up village beds, no one else can take the ground where they have begun. When people quarrel with each other about hoeing, or fight with each other, their friends will say, "They have no sense", or else, "Those are people with a bad name". Because people ought not to fight with each other over land. And more than this, people who pick quarrels over a matter of land, they are likely to be sorcerers. There aren't many ordinary people

[1] e.g. in Sept. 1933 the headman of Kasaka village (cf. Chap. X) made a dry weather garden in ground which his son-in-law, Pensulo, had decided to cultivate. For several days the friends of Pensulo knew that he was angry, but after an interval word was passed round the village that he had decided to ignore the whole affair—i.e. *akaunda*. He had a smaller garden, but acquired personal prestige.

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who would do a thing like that. No! People who quarrel over land or fight over it, they will find themselves unlucky, even nowadays. A decent man, if one of his neighbours starts to abuse him or to accuse him falsely over land, he will just clear out and go and hoe somewhere else, or else they take the matter to someone else to decide. And another thing, nobody ought to make a boundary to show where his ground ends and another begins. If he did a thing like that his neighbours would say he was a sorcerer because he had set up a boundary. His neighbours would not hoe right up to his boundary. When a person has done an unlucky thing like that his people begin to count who quarrelled with him, and who called him a sorcerer, and that is why people of good reputation do not like to set up boundaries to divide off their ground from that of their neighbours, but just to divide up the land amicably.'[1]

Another type of cultivateable soil over which there are well-defined rights are the house-sites (*ifitantala*, sing. *icitantala*) of a deserted village recently abandoned by its inhabitants. These sites are considered very desirable ground, as will be seen, and it is interesting to find that where land acquires value in this area, the tribal conceptions of land tenure are easily adapted to regulate its use. According to two or three statements made to me, a chief could take the whole of an *icibolya* and cultivate on this rich soil for one year before passing it on to the commoners. But I never saw this done myself. The usual practice is for each owner to claim absolute rights to cultivate on the site of his old hut and its immediate environs, or to allot it to one of his own relatives if he is away. Individual ownership is strictly respected in this case, and these rights of cultivation become important when villages begin to move round a very small area as they do near Kasama.

As in the case of millet gardens, the occupier of village beds has absolute rights over his *mputa* while they are in use, and for so many years afterwards that it is clear that he never intends to return. Even where the soil of the village beds was valuable, as at Kacienja, I saw a strip of ground left fallow for four years because the owner was away. Near Kasama also, where good garden ground is extremely scarce, I saw at Mubanga village a large piece of ground left deserted near a densely populated village. People wanted the land but were afraid the absentee owner would be angry if he heard it had been taken. At Kasama village itself there were further examples of the same type.

[1] Statement made by Paul Mushindo.

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military objectives. Whereas some Polynesian chiefs regularly worked in their gardens and could not hope to succeed to this position unless they were expert agriculturists and craftsmen,[1] such a conception of chieftainship would be quite fantastic to the Bemba, among whom the royal clan definitely does not learn to cut trees, the chief male occupation of the tribe.

The same trend of thought seems to have dominated the interests of the tribe as a whole. Even now, when describing the past, the people constantly dwell on the fierceness of their chiefs, their military exploits, and the booty they were able to take from other peoples. In fact, *ubukali*, which may be translated 'ferocity' or 'ruthlessness', rather than bravery, is one of the few qualities I have heard admired in famous men of the past.[2] I noticed that if I ever criticized Bemba laughingly for their inability to carve or to make baskets as well as the surrounding tribes, and asked them what they thought they excelled in, the usual reaction was a throwing back of the shoulders and the word *ubukali* uttered with great intensity, 'But we were fiercer than all the rest. We made them give us tribute.' Gouldsbury and Sheane record that the Bemba of their day used to brag that they did not know how to hoe, for their only trade was war;[3] and though it is obvious that a people could not have lived on tribute alone, the boast is significant.

This tribal ideal is reflected in the Bemba attitude to industry itself. Talking to natives of the present day it is impossible to resist the conclusion that agricultural excellence is really not a trait which is much admired. To have food and beer is considered desirable and even essential to a man of high status, but it is always thought better that this food should have been produced by the labour of some one else. I never heard a young man being praised as a good gardener. The phrase *icilumba ca bulumendo*, the pride or arrogance of youth, may be said in tones of irritation when a young man refuses to hoe, but I think it is more often uttered with a kind of grudging admiration. In middle and old age the successful cultivator is thought well of, and without working he would probably be unable to build up a 'big house'. The word *umulimi* or 'good cultivator' exists and conveys approbation. But industry seems to be thought an unexciting virtue—an advantage or even

[1] Cf. R. Firth, *Primitive Economics of the N. Zealand Maori*, 1929, p. 164.
[2] Generosity and wisdom were the others.
[3] Gouldsbury and Sheane, *The Great Plateau of N. Rhodesia*, 1904, p. 24.

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an essential in a prospective son-in-law, but not admirable in itself, or even a suitable attribute for a young man of spirit. I noticed that when I commented once on a woman who had put a whole stretch of ground under cultivation in one day, that the two young men with me shrugged their shoulders with the kind of pity we usually reserve for obsessional cases. 'Yes! poor woman. Grubbing away all day like a dog!'

This difference between the behaviour of old and young is, I think, the crux of the whole question from a practical point of view. In pre-European days there was a complete change of ambition between the youth and age. The young boy, under the system of matrilocal marriage, had no individual responsibility for gardening. He was expected to cut trees, but his main way of advance in life was to attach himself to a chief or to a man of rank and not to make larger gardens or to collect material goods. He often went on border raids or foraging expeditions. He did not expect to work in earnest until middle age, when his children were 'crying from hunger' and he had settled down. Nowadays we saw in concrete cases the immense difference between the regularity of work done by the old and young. This is partly due to the new insubordination of the boys, but partly also to a perpetuation of an old tradition. In our society youths and adolescents have, roughly speaking, the same economic ambitions throughout youth and early manhood. For most there is the same continuous incentive to make more money from year to year. Among the Bemba this was not so, any more than it was among such warrior peoples as the Masai of East Africa with their regular age-sets. Each individual was expected to be first a fighter and later a cultivator and the father of a family. In modern Africa there is often the same break between the employment of the young and the old. Many writers have pointed out that service at the mines has been substituted for the old warrior service of the young man. But there is of course this difference, that the Bemba goes away to the mines for far longer than he went to war, and that he is not able to settle down continuously in middle age. He has to pay tax until he is past working. He is not free to take his position at home as a father of three or four children and a leading citizen as he did in the old days at the end of his warrior period. Nor is there any reason for him to settle down to become an efficient cultivator.

Thus the answer to our question is, I think, definite. Before the

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coming of the white man, the warrior type was more highly valued than the good gardener in youth, and modern migratory labour has wiped out the stage in which the one would normally have passed into the other. In the absence of stock or other material possessions, the idea of accumulation never existed, nor the habit of organized trade, and with the present shortage of money-making possibilities in this area and the lack of a cash crop, the introduction of European currency did not act as a new incentive to agricultural work, rather the reverse.

Another difficulty inherent in the Bemba system of gardening is the absence of any definite units by which success can be measured or effort reckoned—a fact I have already stressed in descriptions of their methods of calculating quantities or assessing needs. The size of a Bemba garden is not fixed. The labour force of a family varies from month to month. The people are not in the habit of calculating the size of their field or its yield, the time it would take to clear the trees on it, or the amount of grain annually produced. Nor does the particular staple crop used lend itself to accurate measurement of this kind. I found that, if I asked Bemba how much ground they intended to clear, old men had some conception of their future needs, but young men more often replied: 'How much shall we cut? Oh, we shall cut until our arms ache. . . . Till our strength is exhausted. . . . Until we want to go and work for the Europeans. . . . Or until laziness seizes hold of us. Will the garden give enough to feed us? We do not know. Perhaps it will.' These statements are perhaps more casual than would have been heard in the old days—that is impossible to tell—but, in any case, it is clear that with such a system of reckoning, success in food production depends very largely on leadership and a definite compulsion to work.

It is just this leadership which, as we saw, is no longer effective. The matrilocal kinship organization with the economic group which is based on it, is one that is breaking down rapidly in contact with European conditions. The drive behind agricultural production is largely associated with beliefs in the authority of the Bemba chief, sentiments that have been inevitably weakened by contact with Europeanism. The Bembas are still willing to garden if told to, as the experience of the Government during the recent locust raids has shown. When ordered to dig four hundred mounds of cassava, most natives complied, and when the order was

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joking and talking and although there were admonitions by the *nacimbusa* to work harder, to be more serious, and to dance more strenuously (see p. 73), it was plain that these were not spontaneous emotions. 881[X]

The teasing of the girls was apparently considered to be a duty rather than a pleasurable excitement.

There remains the question of the significance of the ceremony to Bemba in terms of its survival in times of change. The chisungu was forbidden by missionaries some thirty to fifty years before I saw a performance in 1931. It is a conspicuous affair since it consists so largely of drumming and dancing and it is not a rite which can be performed in secret within a hut. It is run by women alone and does not have the backing of the chiefs who have supported initiation ceremonies quite tenaciously in some parts of Africa. Present-day economic factors such as shortage of food and the absence of men at the mines, also militate against the persistence of such a rite. In these conditions it is worth asking which part of the chisungu has actually survived. 881[X] 178 [79 7]

The rites were everywhere shortened in 1931 and 1933 when I was in the country. In many places they were not performed at all. In these cases the puberty ritual proper, that is to say the bringing of the girl to the fire after her first period, was retained alone. Although the chisungu itself was not organized, yet there was a combination of the first *ukusolwela*, rite (see p. 54) and the seclusion of the girl in a special hut for some days in villages near the motor road leading from Broken Hill to Kasama and also in the mine compounds at Luanshya and Ndola, all of them areas of maximum contact. This would seem to bear out the conclusions to which the analysis of Bemba comments lead, namely that it is the magic rites of protection that the people consider the most essential part of the chisungu. It also supports Schapera's hypothesis that magic rites tend to survive in contact with Europeanism, while religious ceremonies associated with moral values or prayers to ancestral spirits tend to be abandoned.

The following table gives some attempt at a numerical analysis of the morals taught by means of the chisungu songs and *mbusa*. It will be referred to again. 881[X] 183

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TABLE I

	Pottery figures	*Pottery floor models*	*Wall designs*	*Songs*	*Total*
Chisunga rules Protection of fire	2			8	10
Social obligations of husband and wife.	14	1		4	19
Obligations to in-laws	3				3
Domestic duties	2			8	10
Agricultural duties	3	1		3	7
Maternal duties	4			3	7
Obligations between mother and daughter				3	3
Sex and fertility	4	2	1	5	12
Chief's power	3	1		3	7
General ethical rules	2	1		6	9

THE CHISUNGU IN RELATION TO TRIBAL DOGMA AND VALUES

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The relation of the chisungu to the marriage institution of the Bemba has been clear from the start. It expresses marriage morality—the girl's submission to her husband and his duty to provide for her, and the domestic, agricultural and sexual obligations of both. It provides for the public acceptance of these